

Leanne Knight: Reflections of Course-based Embedded Assignments



Lamar University – M.Ed. in Educational Technology Leadership

Reflections of Course-based Embedded Assignments

Directions: In submitting your Course-based Embedded Assignment located in Appendix I of the Internship Handbook, you are required to complete a reflection of the identified assignments in your course wiki/e-portfolio. These reflections will be used to assist you in completing your EDLD 5388/5370 (*Please note that course number changes in Fall 2010*) Internship comprehensive exam final report. Students should use and cite their textbook references as well as two additional references when writing each reflection. The reflection must consist of statements regarding the knowledge you gained from the assignment and how the assignment helped you master the Technology Facilitator Standard(s) /Indicator(s).

Course Number:	Course Name:	Course-based Embedded Hours (see Appendix I)
EDLD 5306	Concepts of Educational Technology:	A-6 B-6

Description of the Assignment/Performance Tasks (see Appendix I)	A. Students will complete all parts of each Technology/Leadership self-assessments and thoroughly document the results as required. Students will thoroughly summarize key ideas of each section of their State's Technology Plan and describe their State Technology Curriculum Standards. B. Create a blog and wiki reference document
<p>Note: Reflection at a critical level means writing text that reveals your opinion of the reading or experience, why you hold that opinion, how the experience/assignment/reading could be improved, how you see the reading or experience as consistent or inconsistent with what you have learned so far, implications for the future, etc. Reflection should include more content than just a recitation of facts and you should document your writing with a minimum of 3 references.</p> <p>Self –Assessment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Critically reflect (see note above; not just recitation of facts) upon the knowledge you gained from the assignment. (3 Points)2. Critically reflect upon the relationship between any new information you gained from the assignment with old information you previously held to be true. (2 Points)3. How did the relationship between the old and new information you learned affect your personal experience with the assignment? (2 Points)	<p>On average, I was successful with EDLD 5306. I began the program in September 2009.</p> <p>The program has recently had drastic changes enhancing the program. All the content of EDLD 5306 was relevant to my work experience on a daily basis.</p> <p>One very important topic covered was the Texas Long Range Plan for Technology. I have worked with the Texas Long Range Plan for</p>

<p>Learn as a Learner</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critically reflect (see note above; not just recitation of facts) upon your approach and strategies used in completing the assignment. (3 Points) 2. Critically reflect upon how you learn as a learner and how you assess your own performance in completing the assignment(s). (2 Points) 3. How did your learning and interaction with colleagues (such as discussion forum, web conferences, wiki and blog participation, etc.) affect the results of your performance? (2 Points) <p>Lifelong Learning Skills</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critically reflect (see note above; not just recitation of facts) upon what you gained about learning and how you learn that will impact your future learning. (3 Points) 2. How will your past interactions and collaborations with colleagues impact your future learning experiences? (2 Points) 3. As a lifelong learner, what questions or issues challenge you and are worthy of future research or investigation? (2 Points) <p>Additional Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Content posted to e-Portfolio wiki/blog/Google site (1 Point) 2. Mechanics (1 Point) 3. APA Format (1 Point) 4. Minimum of 3 References (1 Point) <p>(Maximum 25 points)</p>	<p>Technology but appreciated the depth to which we were able to learn about the plan. I truly appreciated learning the connections of what the Long Range Plan has affected in Texas.</p> <p>As a public school teacher and technology leader, I always knew we had to give teachers the STaR chart and analyze the data. After week 2, I was able to truly analyze our school and district's data. Before, I would just gear professional development to our lowest scores. Now I understand that the Texas Long Range Plan and its connection to the STaR chart. I completely changed the professional development on our campus due to the research and learning that occurred in week 2. I can now work with teachers with online learning and its advantages without hesitancy due to lack of knowledge.</p> <p>I appreciated delving deeply into the STaR chart and presenting to my colleagues since this is an area that must be addressed yearly at any school I am employed. Our greatest</p>
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	<p>strength on our campus is Leadership, Administration, and Instructional Support. The teachers are given support in many areas. We have at least once a month training for the entire campus. Once every three weeks the CIT meets with teachers to lesson plan and to survey teacher needs. Our principal stays abreast of current trends to stress important issuers in technology with teachers. The principal allocates a large amount of money every year for teachers to go on trips to ISTE, TCEA, and Alan November's BLC. Our small district had 45 teachers and administrators at Alan November's BLC conference in Boston this summer.</p> <p>Our greatest weakness is educator preparation and development. I understand why teachers scored themselves and our campus as only advanced in this area. Due to time constraints they often do not sign up for the professional development offered. The mandatory staff development times are useful. I also agree with my teachers in this key area in</p>
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	<p>which they only gave us 2 points in professional development for online learning. I would love to find ways to help teachers use more online learning. It is just not utilized on our campus yet. Since Moodle was introduced at the end of last year in our district, I can see that this score will definitely increase as teachers utilize this tool more.</p> <p>In an online learning community, I would especially discuss EP6 which consists of Professional Development for Online Learning which is my campus's lowest classification. For the last three years, my campus scored a 2 (Developing) in this area. During this online environment, I would go over the factors that indicate an online learning environment. I can assume that many of the teachers on our campus may not realize that many of the activities they engage in are considered and Online Learning community. Many of our staff members belong to Alan November's Building Leadership Communities in which all the learning takes</p>
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place online with other professionals. I believe it is the jargon that STaR uses during the assessment that teachers get confused and do not realize they participate in these communities of learning online.

While doing other research I found that in 2008 TEA has the state listed as having more than 92% of Texas campuses on an early or developing tech level for Online learning. Online learning for students and for educators is a way for an equitable share of learning to take place. For students, it would not matter if they were in a rural or heavily populated area, with online learning, the education would be the equitable. Teachers could receive professional development in areas that their own district may not be promoting. The teacher could delve into areas they want more information and learning.

One aspect of EDLD 5306 was creating a blog and wiki. The wiki became my e-portfolio and I used the blog to post my reflections. I updated the wiki with links to my blog

	<p>reflections. Since I have utilized a blog for my school, I felt creating a blog was an extremely functional way of utilizing Web 2.0 tools in our Master's classes. As I tell my teachers and my students, it is important to allow reflections to be global. Our children truly appreciate having their writing where people in other countries can access their writing make moderated comments. Using the blog on a regular basis allowed me to become more proficient in the use of blogs. I appreciated developing a wiki. I never realized that on Wikispaces there was a comment section until my Master's courses with Lamar. I was able to show my teachers so they could also employ that as a learning strategy with their students.</p> <p>I have personally seen how students writing have been enhanced while using blogs and forums. The students feel their voice has a global audience and delight in writing. It is fantastic to see students whose parents, grandparents, and other family members have responded to their blogs. Students appreciate</p>
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	<p>having a larger audience than just their teacher and classmates. Blogs give an authentic global audience to their work. Another value belongs to the students who never raise their hand in class to answer a question. Blogging allows them to be heard even if not with their voice. Those students can shine and others can see their progress. An educator can get a better idea of the whole class's ability and not the ones who are always willing to share. It is a better gauge of the learning taking place.</p> <p>Many districts are concerned with students putting too much personal or inappropriate information on their blogs. They worry that this information will get in the wrong hands and cause the students harm. Many districts block all blogs in their area in a way to ensure that no one is breaking the rules. Some districts are worried about teacher misuse of blogs. Some administrators worry their staff members will create a logistical problem by discussing issues that are not appropriate with</p>
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	<p>their students. Some worry teachers and students will post copyrighted information which would put the district in a legal bind.</p> <p>Districts need to set up blogging policies instead of blocking this wonderful tool. If the district informs teachers in their Acceptable Use Policies, teachers will understand the ramifications of information they post. Updating parents and other stakeholders keeps the community apprised of the goings on in the school. The visual of a blog is more aesthetically pleasing than just an email. Plus, with blogging all the “conversations” shared with the stakeholders are in one place. They would not need to search out mailings, newsletters, or emails to see information previously discussed since blogs are linear. Stakeholders can leave comments on a blog as a form of conversation about topics discussed. The community members do not all have to be present at a meeting for the group to know everyone’s views. Also, the blog allows community members and the author to</p>
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	<p>have a better relationship. Each person knows more about a person's thoughts on any given subject. Whereas, in person, the stress of public speaking can get in the way of personal thoughts and only the facts are raised.</p> <p>During EDLD 5306, the assignments were designed to ensure we understood the basic components of PowerPoint, creating and editing blogs and wikis, and delving into the analytical data for my school. The PowerPoint was created to present information concerning the STaR chart. The assignment called for action buttons to transition each slide to the correct next slide. We also had to post our Power Point presentations to our blogs. I appreciated this aspect since I had never posted such articles on a blog before. I used AuthorStream to upload the PowerPoint. My first few attempts were not successful since I found a few errors in my PowerPoint. So, the third upload worked beautifully.</p> <p>One digital age discussion in EDLD 5306 concerned technology integration. "For</p>
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	<p>computers to be effective teaching tools, teachers must thread computer use into group projects, whole-class demos, individual tutoring, classroom management, and alternative assessment and testing along with the traditional teaching methods of lecturing, reading and hands-on activities and experiments" (Price, B. 2005, pg. 53). When I went to Building Leadership Communities conference in Boston during the summer of 2009, Alan November discussed how computer labs should be obsolete. I agree, all that happens in a lab is that every student has to do the same goal at the same time. "For computers to be effective teaching tools, teachers must thread computer use into group projects, whole-class demos, individual tutoring, classroom management, and alternative assessment and testing along with the traditional teaching methods of lecturing, reading and hands-on activities and experiments" (Price, 2005, pg 53). In a constructivist approach, students can easily use a 2-4 classroom computer set up. Most elementary teachers have grasped</p>
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	<p>the concept of stations/centers in their classrooms. However, put technology into their time honored centers, and many teachers have difficulty grasping the concept.</p> <p>In one of the online discussion during EDLD 5306, we discussed the inequities of technology. I previously worked in Title 1 ESL/Bilingual schools and districts considered wealthy. In the “poor” schools, they actually received more funding for everything. In the wealthy schools, their money goes to Robin Hood and parent auctions and fundraisers must raise everything the school spends. In both types of schools, it all depends on the principal and their goals for the school if funding goes to technology. “Solutions to technology inequities ultimately rest with principals in their role as instructional leaders” (Mason & Dobbs, 2005, pg. 27). If in the “poor” schools the principal sees only testing as the main goal, then the digital divide widens. In a wealthy school where parents are raising the money, I have seen</p>
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	<p>that the parents want to ensure that their children get technology so then the principal will make it a goal for the school. It all depends on how the campus principal views the worth of technology. This discussion online was beneficial and assisted me in reflecting on the variety of schools and integration strategies.</p> <p>After my first two courses I took several months off due to the birth of my third child. During the time I was away from the program the Technology Leadership coursework changed considerably. I reorganized my course work in August 2010. Through personal perseverance, I contacted many different people in Academic Leadership about how I needed to understand and be informed of the new requirements. In February 2011, I formulated my plan to involve the Technology Facilitator and Leadership Standards (Williamson & Redish, 2009.). During the process of creating my alignment of each standard, I realized to a large extent my current career is already aligned with these</p>
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	<p>standards. Luckily, I was able to easily find areas that I fulfill each standard. The standards also help leaders to focus their efforts on important issues and know that the areas they are working on are nationally recognized. After looking through ISTE's standards for technology leadership I realize that the content I utilize with the teachers at my school are on the correct path. It also helped me to focus on important aspects such as our district acceptable use and different areas of professional development for the teachers at my school.</p> <p>References</p> <p>Mason, C. Y., & Dodds, R. (2005). Bridge the digital divide for educational equity. <i>The Education Digest</i>, 70(9), 27.</p> <p>Price, B. (2005). Who's in control of the technology-integrated school? <i>Principal</i></p>
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	<p><i>Leadership</i>, 6(1), 53.</p> <p>Williamson, J. & Redish, T. (2009). <i>ISTE's technology facilitation and leadership standards: What every K-12 leader should know and be able to do</i>. Eugene, OR: International Society for Technology in Education.</p>
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